



Law Office of the
PUBLIC DEFENDER
Seventeenth Judicial Circuit

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March 5, 2008

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Duane L. Evans
Facility Administrator
Youth Services International, Inc.
Thompson Academy
1150 Hibiscus Drive
Pembroke Pines, Florida 33025

Dear Mr. Evans:

Be advised that I have recently received several reports from children court ordered to your program noting physical altercations that resulted in physical injury. Based on these reports I am compelled to put you on notice and insist that such be investigated fully with corrective measures taken immediately to assure the safety of youth in your program.

My investigation reveals that the following court committed children were physically injured while attending your program: [REDACTED] sustained injury to his lower lip that resulted in stitches; [REDACTED] was restrained during an incident utilizing a technique known as the "PAR" and it appears excessive force may have been used to restrain him; and an unidentified juvenile's tooth was chipped during some altercation that occurred in your program.

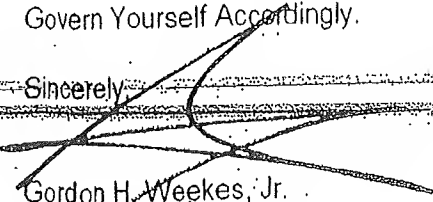
In light of recent cases where committed children have been abused and in some instances killed at the hands of program staffers, corrective action must be taken immediately to address the supervision and training of your staff to prevent further injury.

Be advised that I hereby demand that these allegations be investigated fully with corrective measures taken immediately; and a report containing your findings be forwarded upon its completion.

Thank you kindly for your immediate attention to this matter. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me at 954-831-8636 office or 954-804-4041 cell.

Govern Yourself Accordingly.

Sincerely,


Gordon H. Weekes, Jr.
Chief Assistant Public Defender
Juvenile Division

cc:

Honorable John Frusciante, Juvenile Division Circuit Court
Honorable Charles Kaplan, Juvenile Division Circuit Court
Honorable Michael Orlando, Juvenile Division Circuit Court
Honorable Elijah Williams, Juvenile Division Circuit Court
Honorable Howard Zeidwig, Juvenile Division Circuit Court
Maria Schneider, Office of the State Attorney
Perry Anderson, South Region Juvenile Probation Director
Vanessa Hargray, Juvenile Probation and Community Intervention